Andrus sees happy future in beloved Idaho

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Cecil D. Andrus, looking refreshed and relaxed, defies the axiom that once they tasted big city life they never go back to the country.

It's what is referred to as "Potomac Fever," applied to those who are engrossed with the big national doings in the nation's capital and forget the people back home.

There was another popular saying "they never go back to Pocatello," referring to former U.S. Sen. Glen Taylor, a Democrat from Pocatello. Taylor served one six-year term, was defeated by some 125 votes in the 1956 primary by Sen. Frank Church, then only 32 and a newcomer. Taylor, a carpenter by trade but a so-called "singing cowboy," then went to Milbrae, Calif., where he became a millionaire producing wigs named "Taylor toppers." He is now semi-retired at Milbrae.

But back to Andrus who never lost his yen for Idaho, along with his wife, the youngish, attractive Carol, who was even more desirious of leaving Washington.

Andrus was in Idaho Falls Wednesday night to speak to the volunteerism recognition banquet, delivering his usual interesting talk but making it known he was indeed happy to mingle with fellow Idahoans.

After serving as governor for six years, Andrus resigned four years ago to become secretary of interior under Presdent Carter. Although many cabinet officers were in trouble, Andrus was one of the most popular but announced more than a year ago he would serve no longer, regardless of whether Carter was re-elected or not.

Church, defeated in his bid for a fifth six-year term, had no such ideas. He remained in Washington to take up a lucrative part time law practice in international law, and also dab in college teaching and on the national and international lecture circuit. He didn't even appear at the Jefferson-Jackson Day banquet at Boise last winter, much to the keen disappointment of many of his avid supporters.

"I'm not concerned about my political future," Andrus said. "Right now, I'm interested in getting settled," explaining he is embarking on his new career as a natural resource consultant, plus a few other enterprises.

Andrus would not consider tempting offers in the east but preferred to return to Boise. He is now affiliated with such national firms as Becker, United Solar Associates and a testing firm, with offices at 537 West Bannock.

He has formed his own consulting firm, Resource Management Consulting, in addition.

"I wouldn't mind getting another shot at governor," he said, but left it clear he would not interfere with his longtime political friend and governor, John V. Evans. Evans has left no doubt he will seek another term, and will get the strong backing of Andrus.

Andrus refrained from commenting on President Reagan or his successor, Secretary of Interior James Watt, saying he wanted to give them at least six months to show what they can do.

"Right now, they have talked but have not implemented any of their programs," said Andrus.

He said Watt is expounding some of his plans but he will find, as he, Andrus, discovered, that a cabinet member, is restricted by statutes on what he can do.

"No secretary (of interior) has as much strength as he thinks," said Andrus. "Perhaps this is good because those rules and regulations were set up with a reason."

Andrus said the Republicans are riding high now but they are at a crest and, as in the past, when a party reaches an apex, it will subside.

Andrus predictedin the 1982 off-year Idaho elections more Democrats will be elected to the Legislature but hastened to add it is doubtful if they will be the majority party so soon—maybe later.

Andrus predicted many Idaho voters will turn against the Republicans, particularly because of the lack of funding in education and many other essential programs.

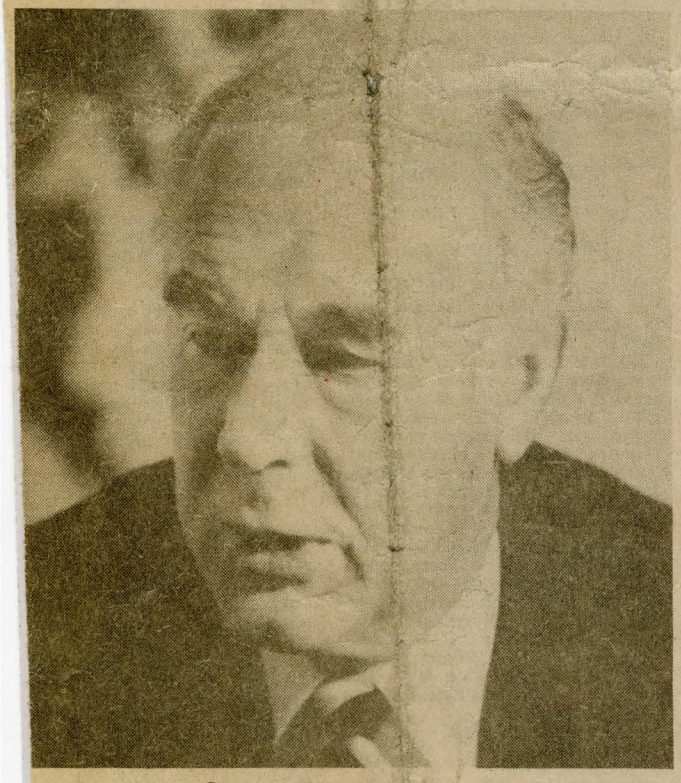
Andrus said he expects to remain politically active, but with a low profile.

"What I will do in the future, who knows?," he said. "Im a political animal and for that reason I don't rule out any political possibilities."

He did not bar prospects of trying for congressional office, although his distaste for Washington life would be considered an obstacle.

Andrus, now 49, has been mentioned as a possible opponent for Sen. James A. McClure, who faces re-election in 1984.

Andrus said Senate Minority Leader Ron J.Twilegar, Boise attorney, who is increasingly mentioned as a U.S. senatorial candidate, would be a viable one.



Cecil D. Andrus